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ABSTRACT

This set of thirty-four national standards for vocational education programs in corrections describes a set of ideal conditions in five areas of vocational education program operations within a correctional institution or system. By providing ideals to which existing conditions and objectives can be compared for evaluation purposes, the standards should help corrections personnel establish goals and develop guidelines for programs of occupational training. The standards are grouped into these five areas of program operations: curriculum and instruction (5), students (9), staff (5), organization and administration (11), and physical plant, equipment, and supplies (4). Standards for curriculum and instruction deal with program descriptions, objectives, and methods and procedures. Orientation, placement, evaluation, and follow-up are included under standards related to students. Standards involving staff have to do with selection and preparation, salary, professional growth, business and industry involvement, and evaluation. Organization and administration standards deal with the staffs of advisory boards, committees, and administraton; financial policies; community relations; planning, research, and development; evaluation; and discrimination. Standards dealing with physical plant, equipment, and supplies relate to planning and safety and health conditions. Discussion follows each standard. (This and two other technical reports are included in the final report, ED 151 569.) (YLB)

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STANDARDS FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTIONS

National Study of Vocational
Education in Corrections

Technical Report No. 2

The Center for Vocational Education
The Ohio State University
1960 Kenny Road
Columbus, Ohio 43210

December 1977

CE 024 840

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

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- Generating knowledge through research
- Developing educational programs and products
- Evaluating individual program needs and outcomes
- Installing educational programs and products
- Operating information systems and services
- Conducting leadership development and training programs

NATIONAL STUDY OF VOCATIONAL
EDUCATION IN CORRECTIONS

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FOREWORD

The National Study of Vocational Education in Corrections developed several products. A complete list is provided on the back cover of this document. Standards for Vocational Education Programs in Correctional Institutions is one of those products. The standards, which appear in this publication, were developed in collaboration with a panel of experts in the fields of vocational education, corrections, and correctional education and with a project advisory committee.

The standards have not yet been adopted as part of any agency's accreditation process. They are, however, being examined by several professional organizations. A possible outcome may be the incorporation of the standards into an accreditation process. The standards provide guidance for corrections personnel to establish vocational education programs or update and enhance already existing programs.

Compliance with these standards may require adjustments in correctional institutions operations, e.g., significant change in traditional operational procedures; increased budgets and reallocation of funds; and commitment from administrators and staff. Dedicated efforts of administrators and staff to make such adjustments will result in vocational education programs which meet the training needs of inmates. As a result, vocational education program accountability will accrue to the systems.

The cooperation of many people and correctional institutions made the standards a reality. Recognition is given to the project's advisory committee and the panel of experts whose input was invaluable in the development of the standards. Appreciation is extended to the 185 correctional and educational personnel from twenty-six sites in Arizona, California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Florida, Illinois, Kansas, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Texas, and Virginia, who made it possible for project staff to test the validity of the standards in operating correctional vocational education programs.

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I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The development, improvement and expansion of vocational education programs in corrections depends, in large part, on the ability of institutions or systems to evaluate their programs. Such evaluation is the process of making judgements about the extent to which programs accomplish institutionally established goals and objectives. Evaluation is also useful in measuring the degree to which an institution's programs meet national standards.

Standards are statements of ideal conditions which exist in successful vocational education programs. This set of national standards for vocational education programs in corrections describes a set of conditions in five areas of vocational education program operations within a correctional institution or system. The standards were developed to help corrections personnel establish goals and develop guidelines for programs of occupational training.

It should be noted that the scope of the National Study of Vocational Education in Corrections included neither the design of a process nor the development of instrumentation whereby the standards could be used to evaluate existing vocational education programs in correctional institutions. It is hoped that the design of a process and instrument development necessary for the expanded use of these standards will be feasible in the near future. In the interim, however, the standards may be useful to corrections personnel seeking to up-grade vocational education programs, establish new goals, develop improved guidelines, and in general, enhance the quality of their program offerings.

II. STANDARDS STATEMENTS AND DISCUSSION

Curriculum and Instruction

1.1 PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Each system or institution has written descriptions for each of the vocational programs.

Discussion: Written descriptions for vocational programs serve students, staff, and others interested in knowing about individual course offerings. Descriptions should be written in such a way that they explain the value and meaning of the course to the student, describe the type of career for which the training prepares the student, provide an indication of recent job demand data, and define the relationship of the program to other educational and training-related activities within the institution. (Also see Standard 2.1)

1.2 PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

Each system or institution has statements of expected student performance for each vocational program.

Discussion: Performance objectives for each vocational program tell both teachers and students what is expected of them in the vocational programs. Objectives also provide a list of what performances will be measured at the end of training. Performance objectives should be reviewed regularly with input from staff, advisory committee members, and students and kept current with expectations held by business and industry and the labor market in general.

1.3 ADMISSION CRITERIA

Each system or institution has and observes a set of written criteria for admission to each vocational program.

Discussion: Admission criteria are measures by which student eligibility for vocational programs is evaluated. Enough flexibility should exist within the criteria themselves as well as in their application to allow decisions to be made on the basis of individual student need, motivation, and desire for participation in vocational education programs. Criteria for student participation in vocational education programs should be a functioning part of the institution's intake and classification process. (Also see Standard 2.2)

1.4 INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Each system or institution has on file for each of its vocational educational programs written comprehensive courses of study which include suggested teaching methods and procedures, and equipment, facilities, and supply resource lists.

Discussion: Concern for the quality of course content and material presentation methods creates the need for written instructional methods and procedures. Review and revision of the methods and procedures as necessary will ensure their correctness and the timeliness of course content for each occupational area for which training is provided.

1.5 LEARNING RESOURCES

Each system or institution has easily accessible the learning resources (e.g., textbooks, manuals, handouts, booklets, tests, audio-visuals, and other special materials) necessary for effective and efficient instruction in each vocational course.

Discussion: Success in working with adult students calls, in part, for high-interest materials and diversified learning methods. However, no matter how well prepared learning resource materials are, they are of no value to students unless the students have easy access to learning facilities, materials, and related equipment. In addition to needing room, resources, and the time for independent study, students will need to be taught how to access and use materials and equipment.

Students

2.1 ORIENTATION TO PROGRAMS

Each system or institution has an on-going orientation program to acquaint students with vocational and academic educational programs.

Discussion: In order for students to be aware of the alternatives available to them through vocational education programs, they must be provided with a well-planned and comprehensive orientation to the total vocational education program. Such an orientation program can also be valuable to new institutional staff members in vocational and academic education and other related areas. (Also see Standard 1.1)

2.2 GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING FOR PROGRAM PLACEMENT

Each system or institution has a guidance and counseling and placement program to test, evaluate, and counsel students in order to place them in vocational programs.

Discussion: Accurate assessment of students' needs prior to placing them in vocational classes better ensures their success and achievement in those classes. Guidance and counseling services which can provide such an assessment are essential to the success of both the vocational programs and the students participating in programs. Although it is desirable to have these services provided by the institution staff, it is possible to contract for their provision by another agency or school. Steps should be taken to guarantee the inclusion of the guidance and counseling and program placement process in the institutional intake and classification procedure. (Also see Standard 1.3)

2.3 RECORDS

Each system or institution maintains a student record system and educational files which are open to staff and to student review, subject to state and/or federal privacy laws.

Discussion: Students and staff benefit from an educational record system and files which are accessible. Open records promote accurate and fair information reporting which facilitates better rapport between those reporting and those reported on. At the time of release from incarceration, a student's educational record should be available to the student, prospective employers, and free-world school personnel.

2.4 VOCATIONAL-TRAINING-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Each system or institution provides students the opportunity for practical application of skills acquired through vocational training during the remainder of his/her stay in the institution.

Discussion: Students should be provided the opportunity to use the skills they have developed through vocational training during their entire term of incarceration. Practical application of newly acquired skills prevents their growing rusty from lack of use and provides a link between the world of training and the world of work.

2.5 STUDENT EVALUATION

Each system or institution has a student evaluation program to test thoroughly and fairly students' learning progress and to certify the attainment of competencies and/or skills necessary to various on-the-job activities.

Discussion: Periodic fair and accurate evaluation of student progress in a vocational training program tells both teacher and student how a student is achieving in relation to how he should be achieving various performance objectives specified for the program. Only through such an evaluation can occupational competencies be tested and certified. Evaluation includes paper-and-pencil tests and practical application of skills learned to complete a real job task. It is also important that students be aware of and actively involved in both the development of evaluation criteria and in the process of evaluation.

2.6 LICENSING AND CREDENTIALING

Each system or institution provides students an opportunity to enter and complete such programs as may lead to appropriate licensing and credentialing once training is completed and competencies are certified through the institution by the appropriate agency or group.

Discussion: Although the rules and regulations governing licensing and credentialing may vary from state to state and occupation to occupation, and the system cannot guarantee a student a license, it is essential that students have the opportunity to become licensed. If licensing is not necessary to a student's ability to obtain a job, completion of training programs should be recognized by some type of diploma or certificate which would also certify the skills attained. Such certification should be recognizable by schools and business and industry in the free world.

2.7 GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING FOR JOB PLACEMENT

Each system or institution has a guidance and counseling and job placement program the function of which is to develop jobs, make jobs available to ex-offenders, counsel students, and assist them in securing jobs appropriate to their job skills.

Discussion: The function of a guidance and counseling program does not end when a student is placed in the appropriate training program. Assistance in searching for a job, preparing for an interview, and being placed in the proper job once training is completed is essential to a student's success in being integrated into the world of work. These services are best performed by trained instructional personnel. However, it is possible to satisfactorily provide the services using personnel from another agency or school. A strong emphasis of the program should be on the development of jobs within the community suitable for ex-students.

2.8 FOLLOW-UP

Each system or institution has a comprehensive follow-up-of-graduates program to determine the degree of relevance and the success of the institution's vocational training activities and job placement services.

Discussion: Awareness of program strengths and weaknesses is vital to the development of a superior training program. Data from well-planned and well-implemented student follow-up programs can provide a great deal of information about the successes and failures of training and placement activities and about what changes are needed to help the program better meet the needs of students and employers--both in the institution and in the free world.

2.9 FOLLOW-THROUGH

Each system or institution has a plan to make credits for vocational education in a correctional institution transferable to educational institutions in the community.

Discussion: A plan for articulation or follow-through services allows credit earned in correctional vocational education programs to be transferred to educational systems in the community, e.g., community or junior colleges, area vocational schools, colleges or universities. Students who do not have the opportunity to complete a vocational education program prior to release from a correctional institution are permitted to transfer credits to a free world program for completion.

Staff

3.1 SELECTION AND PREPARATION

Each system or institution has a written staff selection plan for vocational administrators and faculty.

Discussion: In fairness to both employer and employee, staff selection criteria should be written and available to both. This practice facilitates publicizing and hiring for a position and helps employers and prospective employees evaluate employee capabilities. The criteria should be regarded as guidelines for staff selection. They should be flexible to account for individual differences in prospective employees and job position requirements.

3.2 SALARY AND PROMOTION

Each system or institution has for vocational administrators and faculty a published salary schedule and fringe benefits program which includes a plan for evaluation and promotion.

Discussion: Awareness of institutional salary scales, promotion policy, and evaluation procedures is necessary for maintaining good staff morale. Staff members who are kept informed about salary scales, performance evaluation and promotion criteria, tend to feel more satisfied and secure in their jobs.

3.3 PROFESSIONAL GROWTH

Each system or institution has a written professional growth plan which provides for upgrading of occupational competencies of administrators, teachers, counselors, and other staff through in-service activities, on-the-job experiences, participation in related professional organizations, and additional college training.

Discussion: The effectiveness of educational staff members is affected by the degree to which their materials, teaching methods, and specific occupational skills are current as well as by the degree of their motivational levels. These factors are frequently enhanced by the quality and availability of professional growth opportunities. The existence of a written plan for such professional growth activities assures staff members that such services will be available to them on a regular basis. Released time and compensation for in-service education and for participation in professional organizational meetings should not be overlooked as a motivational factor in professional growth plans.

3.4 BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY INVOLVEMENT

Each system or institution has a plan to involve teachers, placement officers, and counselors with business and industry closely allied to the world of work and to keep teachers and others up-to-date in business and industry activities and technology.

Discussion: Because of their teaching responsibilities, staff members do not often have the time or resources available to them for developing and maintaining valuable contacts with business and industry. These contacts are important to almost every phase of a successful vocational education program and should be built into the institution's overall vocational program. Such contacts help make institution staff aware of how things are being done in the free world work settings, thus enabling staff to design institutional instruction in which the knowledge, skills, and attitudes taught are more realistic.

3.5 STAFF EVALUATION

Each system or institution has an evaluation plan which determines the adequacy of professional preparation, performance, and growth of each vocational education staff member.

Discussion: An evaluation plan established by the institution with input from the staff members is essential to the maintenance of quality staff performance. When staff members are evaluated on the basis of professional preparation, performance, and growth, they are motivated toward quality performance and self-improvement. The existence of an evaluation plan also keeps staff members aware of the expectations of the institution regarding their performance. (Also see Standards 3.2 and 3.3)

Organization and Administration

4.1 PHILOSOPHY, PURPOSE AND MEANS OF PROVIDING VOCATIONAL PROGRAMS

Each system or institution has a current and readily available written statement which describes the institution's vocational education philosophy, programs, and ancillary services provided for inmates.

> Discussion: This statement will familiarize prospective students with the philosophy and the offerings of the vocational education program. It will also demonstrate the relationship between the vocational education program and other functions and departments/areas of the institution. (Also see Standards 1.0 and 2.1)

4.2 ADVISORY BOARD

Each system or institution has an advisory board for vocational education which advises the institutional staff in establishing the philosophy, policies, and procedures for vocational education program operations.

> Discussion: The operation of the overall vocational education program can be well served by the use of an advisory board. The board should be composed of people from the local business, industry, education, government, religious, and social communities who have the experience and ability to provide valuable and timely input to guide the vocational education program efforts of the institution. The advisory board can also serve the vocational education program by providing liaison with the business community and enhancing job development and placement efforts on behalf of the program's students. The board's functions are advisory only.

4.3 COMMITTEES

Each system or institution uses vocational program trade and craft advisory committees to enhance vocational education programs for the purposes of evaluation, community relations, and curriculum development and revision.

> Discussion: The use of well-composed trade or craft committees can greatly enhance the effectiveness of a vocational education program. These committees can serve in an advisory capacity to individual vocational courses or occupational areas within the entire institutional vocational program. They can provide valuable information on current trends in the field; input to curriculum up-dating; assistance in student placement; good public relations with the business and industry community in the free world; and, in some cases, assistance in student follow-up efforts.

4.4 POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Each system or institution has a set of written policies and procedures for the administration and operation of vocational education.

Discussion: A written statement of program policies and procedures serves to keep the vocational education program on the course it has charted for itself. An annual (or more frequent) review of policies and procedures provides a good evaluation of the extent to which goals and objectives reflecting the vocational program philosophy are being addressed via those policies and procedures.

4.5 ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

Each system or institution has properly qualified and/or certified vocational education administrators, supervisors, and necessary support personnel to operate the vocational education program efficiently and effectively.

Discussion: Even the best planned and most comprehensive vocational education program cannot succeed without the efforts of an administrative staff composed of properly trained and qualified personnel. These persons must be dedicated to the success of the programs. They are the key to recruiting and hiring the best teachers for the programs.

4.6 TEACHING LOAD

Each system or institution has a plan for determining appropriate vocational education teaching load consistent with the characteristics and demands of the program being taught, the characteristics of the students, the nature of the facilities, and the needs of the teachers for non-instructional time.

Discussion: The quality of teacher performance and student achievement of performance objectives is often affected by the amount of teaching time required of the teacher as well as the number of students taught. Time required to teach and number of students taught are factors which must be realistically considered for each vocational program in determining what teachers can be expected to do for students. Examination of performance objectives, characteristics of the occupational area, students, skills required by the job, and physical facilities will help to determine how much instructional and non-instructional lesson preparation time must be allocated to each program. It will also determine how many students the program can accommodate.

4.7 FINANCIAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Each system or institution has written financial policies and procedures which provide for stable program budgeting to supply resources necessary to meet vocational education objectives.

Discussion: Unless the financial policies of a system are written to include the support of the vocational education program, even the best program is doomed. This system of planning may profit from including the vocational education program administrator in the fiscal decision-making body. The system thereby better ensures an awareness of the program's fiscal needs and, thus, institutional support for the program.

4.8 COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND SUPPORT

Each system or institution has written community relations plans for its vocational education program.

Discussion: Close cooperation between an institution's vocational education program and local community agencies and programs is frequently very necessary to the success of institutional program offerings. Good community relations can help provide not only higher quality programs but a much broader selection of programs and training experiences for students as well as job placement opportunities. The community often needs to be told what is going on within the educational programs of the institution.

4.9 PLANNING, RESEARCH, AND DEVELOPMENT

Each system or institution has a written plan for continuous planning, research, and development activities dealing with vocational education program operations, policies, procedures, curriculum, facilities, staff, equipment, and budget.

Discussion: To keep an institution's vocational program activities current and effective, on-going planning, research, and development should be undertaken. Short- and long-range planning activities should be broad enough in scope to include the total vocational education program from curriculum development and revision to facilities use and maintenance. Planning, research, and development can be conducted by internal staff and/or by personnel from an outside agency who are qualified to perform such functions. The results of the research efforts should be used to alter and improve educational activities which are beneficial and rewarding to those providing the programs and those participating in them. (Also see Standard 5.3)

4.10 EVALUATION

Each system or institution has a written plan for continuous collection of evaluation data about vocational programs' operations, policies, procedures, curriculum, facilities, students, staff, equipment, and budget.

Discussion: Evaluation of an institution's vocational education program must be an on-going process. It determines where the program is in relation to where it should be and suggests needed changes and improvements. Evaluation can be conducted by persons from within or outside the system. The use of evaluation data in planning, development, and research is vital to the success of vocational program efforts.

4.11 DISCRIMINATION

Each system or institution has a written plan to identify and attempt to eliminate discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, and/or condition of handicap in staff selection and assignments, student selection, and planning and development of curriculum and instruction.

Discussion: Each human has unique capabilities which can benefit the individual and those around him. To realize this fact, act upon it, and portray this truth to others, discriminatory actions and information must be eliminated from an institution's operations. The elimination from curricula and instructional materials of biased and/or stereotyped information concerning race, color, creed, sex, religion, or handicaps is one action institutions must plan to undertake. Elimination of discriminatory hiring, firing, and student placement and treatment practices should also be planned.

Physical Plant, Equipment, and Supplies

5.1 OPERATION PLAN

Each system or institution has a documented plan for the operation and use of vocational education program facilities, equipment, and supplies including use manuals and emergency procedures.

Discussion: Staff and students must be able to make effective use of the facilities, equipment, and supplies which are part of their classroom. They need also to learn how to operate unfamiliar equipment and how to function in an emergency situation. The availability of documented procedural instructions and operation manuals is essential to meeting those needs.

5.2 MAINTENANCE PLAN

Each system or institution has a plan for preventive maintenance and housekeeping activities related to all vocational facilities, equipment, and supplies.

Discussion: In order to provide teachers and students with quality facilities, equipment, and supplies, every effort must be made to ensure the good repair and working condition of equipment and facilities. A plan of preventive maintenance and housekeeping activities helps guarantee that tasks are accomplished and not overlooked as a result of haste or forgetfulness. Students' involvement in preventive maintenance and housekeeping duties frequently is part of the learning experience in which they are engaged and will serve them well both in and out of the classroom.

5.3 SHORT AND LONG-RANGE PLANNING

Each system or institution has a plan for short- and long-range development of new facilities, acquisition of new equipment and supplies, and modification of existing facilities and equipment for vocational education programs.

Discussion: Effective budgetary allocations for equipment and facilities purchase and/or modifications depends on the existence of well-considered short- and long-range plans. These include the need for and development of new facilities; the improvement of existing facilities, equipment, and supplies to support existing and planned-for vocational programs; the acquisition of new equipment; and the planned replacement of equipment when worn out or obsolete. (Also see Standard 4.9)

5.4 SAFETY AND HEALTH CONDITIONS

Each system or institution's vocational education program's safety and health conditions meet local, state, and national standards.

Discussion: Local, state, and national standards have been established for evaluating safety and health conditions in vocational classrooms and shops. These standards should be used and adhered to by every system or institution to ensure safe and healthful working and learning conditions for staff and students.

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STUDY OBJECTIVES

The major objectives of the National Study of Vocational Education in Corrections were:

- To describe the state-of-the-art of vocational education in corrections as it is reflected in contemporary literature and documents.
- To identify and synthesize a set of standards by which vocational education programs, operations, and outcomes may be evaluated.
- To survey nationally all vocational education programs in corrections to develop a data base for future planning and evaluation.

NATIONAL STUDY OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IN CORRECTIONS TECHNICAL REPORTS

1. Vocational Education in Corrections: An Interpretation of Current Problems and Issues.

2. Standards for Vocational Education Programs in Correctional Institutions.

3. Vocational Education in Correctional Institutions: Summary of a National Survey.

AVAILABILITY

For information on the availability of these reports contact: CVE Publications, The Center for Vocational Education, The Ohio State University, 1960 Kenny Road, Columbus, Ohio 43210